

## Message Text

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ACTION OPIC-06

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P 161440Z SEP 76

FM AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0185

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DEPT PASS OPIC

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EINV, IV

SUBJ: OPIC ANNUAL "D" AWARD

REF: STATE 223677

1. THE HOTEL IVOIRE IS OWNED BY THE GOIC AND THE  
MAFIT TRUST CORPORATION, LTD. (THE LATTER INCORPORATED  
IN SWITZERLAND AND ISRAEL), EACH HAVING AN EQUITY INTEREST  
OF APPROXIMATELY 46 PERCENT. INTERCONTEINENTAL HOTEL  
CORPORATION HAS AN EIGHT PERCENT EQUITY INTEREST,  
HAVING INVESTED 2,360,000 US DOLLARS OF THE TOTAL  
INVESTMENT OF 29, 262,000 US DOLLARS. THE HOTE IS  
MANAGED BY MITRA, A SWISS CORPORATION, WHICH SUBLEASED  
THE MANAGEMENT CONTRACT TO NTERCONTENTAL HOTEL  
CORPORATION.

2. THIS EXTRAORDINARY HOTEL HAS GAINED THE  
REPUTATION AS THE FINEST IN ALL OF AFRICA.  
IN THE APRIL 1975 EDITION OF "MASTER BUSINESS  
ADMINISTRATION", A FREE-LANCE JOURNALIST NAMED  
NICOLAS LYNN WROTE AN ARTICLE IN WHICH HE SAID  
THE HOTEL IVORIRE IS ONE OF THE TEN MOST BEAUSTIFUL  
HOOTELS IN THE WORLD. CONSTRUCTED IN 1963,  
ON THE LAGOON SIDE OF COCODY, THE MOST PRESTIGIOUS  
SUBURB IN ABIDJAN, THE HOTEL CONSISTED OF  
ONLY 250 ROOMS PLUS RESTAURANTS AND SOME OTHER

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ELEMENTS NOT COMMON TO MOST HOTELS. TODAY IT

CONSISTS OF 750 ROOMS, WHICH INCLUDE A NEW WING ADDED TO THE HOTEL, AND A TOWER, OFFERING A MAGNIFICENT VIEW OF ABIDJAN ACROSS THE COCODY LAGOON FROM AN OBSERVATORY ON THE THIRTIETH FLOOR OF THE TOWER.

3. THE HOTEL OFFERS VIRTUALLY EVERYTHING TO TRAVELING BUSINESSMEN, FAMILIES, AND TOURISTS. THERE ARE SIX RESTAURANTS, SIX BARS, A CASINO, A DISCOTHEQUE, BOUTIQUES, OFFICE SPACE, A BOWLING ALLEY, AN ICE SKATING RINK, A LARGE ADULT SWIMMING POOL, A LARGE CHILDREN'S SWIMMING POOL, AN ARTIFICIAL LAKE WITH BATTERY-OPERATED BOATS FOR CHILDREN, A MARINA FOR BOATS, A HELIPORT, AN AMUSEMENT CENTER, TROPICAL FLOWER GARDENS, A NINE-HOLE GOLF COURSE, AND FIVE TENNIS COURTS. BOATS WILL SOON TAKE GUESTS DIRECTLY FROM ABIDJAN'S AIRPORT, PORT-BOUET, TO THE HOTEL AND BACK. FINALLY, THERE IS THE PALAIS DES CONGRES, A CONFERENCE HALL, WITH A SEATING CAPACITY OF 2200 PERSONS, PLUS SIX SMALLER CONFERENCE OR CAUCUS ROOMS, WHICH WILL ACCOMMODATE FROM 20 TO 150 PERSONS. THE WHOLE COMPLEX, INCLUDING SURROUNDING AFRICAN DECOR, IS EXCEEDINGLY PLEASING TO THE EYE. FEW BUSINESSMEN OR TOURISTS WHO HAVE VISITED THE EMBASSY HAVE FAILED TO COMMENT WITH WONDERMENT AT THIS IMPOSING EDIFICE LOCATED ON THE GULF OF GUINEA.

4. THE HOTEL HAS UNQUESTIONABLY MADE A SUBSTANTIAL CONTRIBUTION TO THE PRESTIGE OF THE IVORY COAST. IN FACT, IT HAS PLAYED A LARGE ROLE IN MAKING THE IVORY COAST THE GATEWAY TO WEST AFRICA, AND CHOSEN STOP-OVER POINT FOR THOSE PROCEEDING ON TO EAST AFRICA. IT HAS FROM THE TIME IT OPENED ITS DOORS ATTRACTED BUSINESSMEN IN INCREASING NUMBERS, AND IN LATER YEARS IT HAS ATTRACTED AN INCREASING NUMBER OF TOURISTS. IT HAS CERTAINLY CONTRIBUTED TO MAKING THE IVORY COAST, OR MORE STRICTLY SPEAKING, ABIDJAN, A REGIONAL MARKET, FINANCE, AND COMMUNICATIONS CENTER FOR WEST AFRICA, AS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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WELL AS A CONFERENCE CENTER. AMONG THE REGIONAL OR WORLDWIDE CONFERENCES RECENTLY HELD IN THE HOTEL'S FACILITIES WERE THE WORLD PEACE THROUGH LAW CONFERENCE, AIR AFRIQUE'S SECOND HEADS OF STATE MEETING, THE ANNUAL MEETINGS OF THE INTERNATIONAL COTTON INSTITUTE AND THE INTERNATIONAL COTTON ADVISORY COMMITTEE, PANAM AFRICA MEETING, WHERE PRESIDENT WILLIAM T. SEAWALL ADDRESSED HIS

MANAGRS IN AFRICA, THE WEST AFRICAN MONETARY UNION, AND THE FIRST PART OF THE ECOSOC PLENARY SESSION. IN FEBRUARY 1977, THE HOTEL WILL PLAY HOST TO THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF TRIAL LAWYERS. THIS LIST IS BY NO MEANS INCLUSIVE.

5. THE EMBASSY BELIEVES THE CONTENTS OF PARAGRAPH FOUR SUBSTANTIATE THAT THE HOTEL HAS ASSISTED IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE LOCAL ECONOMY. IN ADDITION, IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT THE HOTEL IVORIRE EMPLOYS 800 PERSONS. IN 1963, IT EMPLOYED 65 EXPATRIATES AND 249 IVORIANS. TODAY THE HOTEL EMPLOYES ONLY 30 EXPATRIATES, 621 IVORIANS, AND 149 NON-IVORIAN AFRICANS. OF THE TEN TOP MANAGEMENT POSITIONS, FOUR ARE OCCUPIED BY IVORIANS. THIRTY-NINE MIDDLE MANAGEMENT POSITIONS ARE HELD BY IVORIANS. THUS THE HOTEL IS CONTRIBUTING TO THE IVORIANIZATION OF THE ECONOMY, ONE OF THE GOIC'S LONG-TERM GOALS. THE HOTEL IS CERTAINLY ON GOOD TERMS WITH THE HOST GOVERNMENT SINCE THE LATTER HAS A HEFTY EQUITY INTEREST IN IT, AND THE HOTEL IS A MONEY MAKER. THE SIXTH PARTY CONGRESS OF THE PDCI WAS HELD IN THE HOTEL'S CONFERENCE FACILITIES, AND WAS EXTREMELY WELL MANAGED, THUS ENHANCING THE GOOD RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE HOTEL AND THE GOIC. IN SUM, THE EMBASSY BELIEVES THE HOTEL IVORIRE MEETS BOTH THE CRITERIA SPECIFIED IN THE REFTEL.  
COOKE

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